



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

9266th meeting

Tuesday, 21 February 2023, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Camilleri. (Malta)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Spasse
Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
China	Mr. Zhang Jun
Ecuador	Mrs. Sánchez Izquierdo
France	Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault
Gabon	Ms. Koumby Missambo
Ghana	Mr. Agyeman
Japan	Mr. Tamaura
Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation.	Mr. Nebenzia
Switzerland	Mrs. Baumann-Bresolin
United Arab Emirates	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Phipps
United States of America.	Mr. Kelley

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

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23-05414 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Mr. Jeffrey Sachs, Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development, Earth Institute, Columbia University; and Mr. Ray McGovern, political activist.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Ms. DiCarlo.

Ms. DiCarlo: On 30 September 2022, the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Navid Hanif, briefed the Security Council on the reported leaks in the Nord Stream pipelines (see S/PV.9144). His briefing was based on information and data from publicly available sources. My briefing today is also based on publicly available information that we have to date.

As Assistant Secretary-General Hanif said in September, in the course of 26 to 29 September 2022, four leaks were detected in the Nord Stream undersea pipelines in the Baltic Sea, near the island of Bornholm. The first leak was reported on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline on the morning of 26 September, when seismologists detected a spike in activity. The second and third leaks were reported on the evening of 26 September on the Nord Stream 1 pipeline. A fourth leak was reported on the morning of 29 September on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. Neither pipeline was in operation. Supplies in Nord Stream 1 had been halted in September, while Nord Stream 2 never entered service. However, the pipelines reportedly held several hundred million cubic metres of natural gas at the time of the incidents.

Following the incidents, Danish, German and Swedish officials announced they would launch separate investigations into the leaks. The Russian Federation expressed interest in joining those investigations, while

also expressing concern that a deliberate act of sabotage and terrorism might be to blame for the explosions that caused the leaks.

On 18 October, Copenhagen police reported that a preliminary investigation into the leaks found that powerful explosions caused the damage. A month later, on 18 November, the Swedish Security Service and the Prosecution Authority reported that, according to their preliminary findings, the pipelines had been subject to gross sabotage. Swedish officials stated that, in the investigations carried out onsite in the Baltic Sea, investigators documented extensive damage to the gas pipelines resulting from detonations. Swedish authorities also said they had seized foreign items and that explosive residue was identified on a number of those items. According to officials quoted in local media, the investigation is ongoing. On 4 February 2023, the German Attorney General stated that their investigation was also continuing. We understand that the Danish investigation is continuing as well. Furthermore, we are aware of new reports alleging acts of sabotage involving the two pipelines.

I reiterate that the United Nations is not in a position to verify or confirm any of the claims relating to these incidents and that we await the findings of ongoing national investigations. Given the sensitivity and speculation regarding this issue, we urge all those concerned to show restraint and avoid any speculation. We should avoid any unfounded accusations that could further escalate the already heightened tensions in the region and potentially inhibit the search for the truth.

And while we do not know exactly what happened beneath the waters of the Baltic Sea in September 2022, one thing is certain: whatever caused the incident, its fallout counts among the many risks the invasion of Ukraine has unleashed. One year since the start of the war, we must redouble our efforts to end it, in line with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The President: I thank Ms. DiCarlo for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Sachs.

Mr. Sachs: My name is Jeffrey Sachs. I am University Professor at Columbia University. I am a specialist in the global economy, including global trade, finance, infrastructure and economic Statecraft. I appear before the Security Council on my own behalf. I represent no Government or organization in the testimony that I will deliver.

The destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines on 26 September constitutes an act of international terrorism and represents a threat to the peace. It is the responsibility of the Security Council to take up the question of who might have carried out the act, in order to bring the perpetrator to international justice, to pursue compensation for the damaged parties and to prevent future such actions.

The consequences of the destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines are enormous. They include not only the vast economic losses related to the pipelines themselves and their future potential use, but also the heightened threat to transboundary infrastructure of all kinds: submarine Internet cables, international pipelines for gas and hydrogen, transboundary power transmission, offshore wind farms and more. The global transformation to green energy will require considerable transboundary infrastructure, including in international waters. Countries need to have full confidence that their infrastructure will not be destroyed by third parties. Some European countries recently expressed concern over the safety of their offshore infrastructure.

For all of those reasons, the investigation of the Nord Stream explosions by the Security Council is a high global priority.

The destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines required a very high degree of planning, expertise and technological capacity. The Nord Stream 2 pipelines are a marvel of engineering. Each section of pipe is made of rolled steel of 4.5-centimetre thickness, and with a pipeline internal diameter of 1.15 metres. The pipe is encased in concrete of 10.9-centimetre thickness. The weight of each section of concrete-encased pipe is 24 metric tons. The Nord Stream 2 pipelines, some 1,200 kilometres in length, contain around 200,000 pipes. The pipelines sit on the sea floor.

Destroying a pipeline of heavy rolled steel, encased in concrete, at depths of 70 to 90 metres, requires highly advanced technology for the transportation of the explosives, diving to install the explosives and detonation. To do so undetected, in the exclusive economic zones of Denmark and Sweden, adds greatly to the complexity of the operation. As a number of senior officials have publicly confirmed, an action of this sort must have been carried out by a State-level actor. Only a handful of State-level actors have both the technical capacity and access to the Baltic Sea to

have carried out this action. Those include the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, Poland, Norway, Germany, Denmark and Sweden, either individually or in some combination. Ukraine lacks the necessary technologies, as well as access to the Baltic Sea.

A recent report by *The Washington Post* revealed that the intelligence agencies of the NATO countries have privately concluded that there is no evidence whatsoever that Russia carried out this action. That also comports with the fact that Russia had no obvious motive to carry out this act of terrorism on its own critical infrastructure. Indeed, Russia is likely to bear considerable expenses to repair the pipelines.

Three countries have reportedly carried out investigations of the Nord Stream terrorism, namely, Denmark, Germany and Sweden. Those countries presumably know much about the circumstances of the terrorist attack. Sweden in particular has perhaps the most to tell the world about the crime scene, which its divers investigated. Yet instead of sharing that information globally, Sweden has kept the results of its investigation secret from the rest of the world. Sweden has refused to share its findings with Russia and has turned down a joint investigation with Denmark and Germany. In the interest of global peace, the Security Council should require those countries to immediately turn over the results of their investigations to the Council.

There is only one detailed account to date of the Nord Stream destruction, the one recently put forward by investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, ostensibly based on information leaked to Hersh by an unnamed source. Hersh attributes the Nord Stream destruction to a decision ordered by United States President Joe Biden and carried out by United States agents in a covert operation that Hersh describes in detail. The White House has described Hersh's account as "completely and utterly false," but did not offer any information contradicting Hersh's account and did not offer any alternative explanation.

Senior United States officials made statements before and after the Nord Stream destruction that showed the United States animus towards the pipelines. On 27 January 2022, Under-Secretary of State Victoria Nuland tweeted, "If Russia invades Ukraine, one way or another, Nord Stream 2 will not move forward." On 7 February, President Biden said, "If Russia invades ... again, then there will be no longer Nord Stream 2; we

will bring an end to it.” When asked by the reporter how he would do that, he responded, “I promise you we will be able to do it.”

On 30 September 2022, immediately following the terrorist attack on the pipeline, Secretary of State Antony Blinken declared that the destruction of the pipeline is “also a tremendous opportunity; it’s a tremendous opportunity to once and for all remove the dependence on Russian energy and thus to take away from Vladimir Putin the weaponization of energy as a means of advancing his imperial designs.” On 28 January 2023, Under-Secretary Nuland declared, in testimony to Senator Ted Cruz in the United States Senate, “I am, and I think the Administration is, very gratified to know that Nord Stream 2 is now, as you like to say, a hunk of metal at the bottom of the sea.”

Such language is not at all appropriate in the face of international terrorism. I hope that the United States, together with all other Security Council members, will condemn this act of international terrorism and join together in an urgent Security Council-led investigation of this international crime in order to determine the truth. The truth is not yet known by the world, but it is knowable.

More than ever, the world depends on the Security Council to do its work to stop the escalation to a new world war. The world will be safe only when the permanent members work together diplomatically to solve global crises, including the war in Ukraine and the rising tensions in East Asia. The Security Council provides the unique global venue for that peace-affirming work. More than ever, we need a healthy, functioning Security Council carrying out the mission assigned to it by the Charter of the United Nations. A Security Council objective investigation of the Nord Stream terrorism, in which all countries contribute what they know, is important for the global confidence in this body and, most important, for global peace and sustainable development.

The President: I thank Mr. Sachs for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. McGovern

Mr. McGovern: I associate myself completely with the comments of Professor Sachs.

I do not have a prepared text, and so I was not able to give that to the people who asked me to give it to them. I was asked to do this less than a day ago. No one suggested what I might say and, of course, no one

even asked me what I would say. These are my personal remarks based on my experience for 27 years as an intelligence analyst and as an observer. I notice that I am called a political activist. This is my way of paying back for the education I got as an intelligence analyst in the United States intelligence community.

On my way here, at two airports this morning, I noticed a bunch of little children and school-aged children. It made me think back to my days as a school-aged child. I was one of those who hid under their desk because of the threat of the Russian atomic bomb, as though that would protect me. Fast forward to when I became a professional analyst and chief of the Soviet foreign policy branch at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) — I was able to tell the President and Henry Kissinger that the Russians were really interested in putting a cap on the arms race. Suffice it to say, I was instrumental in the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), signed in May 1972. I was there.

Thirty years of strategic stability — count them, three decades — when Mr. Bush Jr., decided that he would leave the ABM Treaty, without any real explanation. And then Mr. Trump left the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which I thought would never be concluded because it involved the destruction of a whole class of nuclear-tipped intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Europe and Siberia. Then we had the Open Skies Treaty, which the United States left, and now we are being warned that the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty is also in danger.

I must say that, after the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty was signed, I was feeling euphoric. I need not worry about whether or not they were constructing a building just to be demolished by the next nuclear weapon. It is very sad for me to watch what is going on now — the fact that people cannot get together and deal. *Verhandeln* is the German word for negotiate or deal. If we look at it, it comes from the word “hand”. You reach out a hand and get to know and understand what is bothering the other party.

I do not want to get ahead of myself here. I do not want to talk about Seymour Hersh’s article. I must say up front, in full disclosure, that I am a friend of Seymour Hersh. I will not therefore opine myself. I will cite a distinguished former United States Ambassador who was also Assistant Secretary of Defence. These are the words he said about Seymour Hersh.

“Hersh attracts whistleblowers because he has a perfect record of protecting their identities and accurately publishing what they reveal after due diligence, despite Government denials and slanderous attacks that invariably follow. His reputation is such that people of conscience seek him out.”

I repeat, people of conscience.

As a United States Army officer and a CIA employee, I took an oath. It was an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Some of us took that oath seriously. And when we see this kind of thing going on, we go to somebody who might be able to protect us and get the word out.

That was two weeks ago. Has *The New York Times* mentioned Sy Hersh’s article? Has it even reported the denials? No, not yet. That is what the Germans would say is *merkwürdig* — very remarkable. Let me go on and talk about how to evaluate those who are smearing Seymour Hersh’s name.

As Jeffrey Sachs already said, the CIA spokesperson said that “the claim is completely and utterly false”. I must confess, being an alumnus of the CIA, that our public relations people do not have a very good record. No one wants to go back 20 years to Colin Powell’s speech before the Security Council (see S/PV.4701). We all know about that. What I would like to do is simply talk about what happened before that speech.

Before that speech, some conscientious whistleblower gave the text of a United Nations debriefing of Hussein Kamel Al-Majid, one of Saddam Hussein’s sons-in-law. Who was he? He supervised the radiological biological, chemical and nuclear programme, such as it was, in Baghdad. He said to his interviewers — United Nations, United States and United Kingdom interviewers — “all nuclear, chemical, biological and missile programmes had been destroyed”. The interrogators asked him, “How do you know?” Al-Majid said, “I was in charge of them. I do not know how it works in your country but when I order something destroyed, it is destroyed”. He was asked, “How do you know? Did you check?” He said, “Yes, I checked. Are you trying to get me to say they were not destroyed”?

That was in 1995. Someone leaked that transcript to *Newsweek*. On 2 March 2003, almost exactly 20 years ago, *Newsweek* published a report that

“Hussein Kamel, the highest-ranking Iraqi official ever to defect from Saddam Hussein’s inner circle, told CIA and British intelligence officers and U.N. inspectors in the summer of 1995 that after the gulf war, Iraq destroyed all its chemical and biological weapons stocks and the missiles to deliver them.

“Kamel ... had direct knowledge of what he claimed: for 10 years, he ran Iraq’s nuclear, chemical, biological and missile programs.”

In classic understatement, in *Newsweek*, the author John Barry said that “the defector’s tale raises questions about whether the WMD stockpiles attributed to Iraq still exist.”

Well — I guess. What happened? *Newsweek* published that in a little blurb, first on its website. Then the members of the media went to a fellow named Bill Harlow, who was the CIA spokesperson, who said, “Look, this report is incorrect. It is bogus. It is wrong and untrue”. Those were the words he used — incorrect, bogus, wrong and untrue. And what did the members of the press do? They breathed a sigh of relief and said, “I am sure glad you told us that, because we were going to publish on that. It looked quite authoritative”. It was indeed the transcript of that debriefing. I would just like to say a word about those who are smearing Sy Hersh. They do not have a good record of being credible.

Let me move on. I would like to talk a little bit about “unprovoked”. We have heard more than 100 times that the Russian invasion of Ukraine was unprovoked. That goes back to the widening of NATO, despite the promise not to do so. I had a personal experience with one of Gorbachev’s chief advisers. His name is Viktor Borisovich Kuvaldin. Approximately eight years ago, I saw him in Moscow and said, “Mr. Kuvaldin, why is it that that agreement was not written down?” He said, “Mr. McGovern, I will tell you: the usual reasons. The Germans had not bought into it yet and the Warsaw Pact still existed, but really and truly Mr. McGovern, here is what it was: we trusted you”.

We all know the history of how NATO more than doubled in size with all countries to the East — more than one inch to the East. I do not want to belabour that point. It is simply that it is more than just NATO enlargement. When Crimea was annexed by Russia, Mr. Putin got up a month later and said: “We had to annex Crimea because of the coup in Kyiv in February of 2014”.

And even more important than NATO membership for Ukraine was the prospect that medium-range ballistic missiles would be put on the periphery of the United States, which indeed they are capable of doing because there are capsules, or holes, in Romania and Poland that accommodate Tomahawk cruise missiles and will eventually accommodate hypersonic missiles. That is very serious. Mr. Putin made this point in December 2021 in talking to his chief military leadership.

How do I end this? I would like to do a little human business here. In terms of the *verstehen*, let me just point out that when I was previously in Germany, there was a button that one put on their lapel, which read, “*Putin verstehe*”. Those who know German know that means someone who understands Putin. I thought to myself: “Woah, somebody is interested in understanding Mr. Putin?” And my friend said, “No, hey, for God’s sake, do not wear that button. That is pejorative. That means that you are Putin’s pocket”. *Verstehen* comes from the word *stehen*, which means “to stand”. If you cannot understand where people stand, then you cannot understand what bothers them. And what bothers Mr. Putin, as well as membership in NATO for Ukraine, is the emplacement of those holes already operational in Romania and Poland, right on the periphery of the United States. They are disguised as anti-ballistic missile systems, but they can easily accommodate cruise missiles, and, as I said earlier, hypersonic missiles.

There was a slogan that emerged from the recent German demonstrations, which was *verhandeln statt schießen*. *Verhandeln* means to negotiate, to talk. You reach out a hand, *die Hand*, to the other person and try to understand them. *Schießen* means to shoot. Now that makes good sense. But I have to tell members that that is not welcome in Germany. A good friend of mine, Heinrich Bücker, was convicted of saying that we ought to put ourselves in Mr. Putin’s shoes and that we ought to realize the far-right influence in the Government of Kyiv. He was convicted in a German court. He is appealing, but he will not pay the €2,000 fine. It is therefore likely that he will end up in jail for several months. That is freedom of speech. We enjoy that here in the United States. I really am concerned about what will happen to my friend.

Just suffice it to say that, with regard to *verhandeln* — to extend your hand — let us be human here. Let us not dust each other off. Let us extend our hands. *Verhandeln statt schießen*. it was very bleak in

our country during the suppression of blacks. I had the privilege of working with Vincent Harding, who was the author of Martin Luther King Jr.’s speech on Viet Nam. He had a song, part of the refrain of which went, “We are going to keep on moving forward, never turning back”. What I would suggest is that we need to keep on moving forward, and I would recommend the second stanza of the song to all members. If they listened, I would really appreciate it very much:

“We’re going to keep on moving forward. We’re going to keep on loving our enemy. We’re going to keep on loving our enemies. We’re going to keep our loving our enemies, never turning back. Never turning back.”

In conclusion, I will just refer to those children whom I noticed, more than I usually notice children, in the airports today. As members of the Council have the power to do so given to them after previous major World War, I ask them to do what is necessary so that no one kills the children anymore.

The President: I thank Mr. McGovern for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have gathered together today for a very important meeting. Although it has been convened like others, it is significantly different in tone from the previous meeting (S/PV.9144) on the sabotage against the Nord Stream pipelines, which was convened on the 30 September 2022. As many of us recall, even then it was clear in principle who could be behind the act of international terrorism, which is exactly how we define those events. The Russian investigative authorities had already initiated criminal proceedings under the relevant article of our country’s criminal code. The United States leadership made several statements, the meaning of which boiled down to the fact that, if Russia continued to act contrary to the wishes of the United States, then the Nord Stream pipelines would be destroyed. In his inappropriate Russophobic tirades on social media, a Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, Mr. Sikorski, who was privy to something, thanked the United States. That was in addition to the text message that former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Theresa May, who hates our country no less, carelessly sent out. The United States, however, has strongly denied — and, incidentally, continues

to deny, conscious of potential consequences — its involvement in the sabotage against vital international pipeline infrastructure.

Since then, there have been more examples of officials in Washington gloating over the Nord Stream bombing, not least thanks to the well-known Russophobe and the godmother of the anti-constitutional coup in Ukraine, Ms. Nuland. But, of course, we would not have requested calling this meeting just because of that. The fact is that, on 8 February, thanks to the well-known American Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, we learned not only that the United States did it, but also how they did it with the complicity of their Norway NATO ally. Based on the facts and witness testimonies, he has convincingly proven that, during the NATO BALTOPS exercise in the summer of 2022, American divers planted explosives under the Nord Stream pipelines that the Norwegians activated three months later on 26 September 2022. We now know with an extreme degree of probability not only who blew up our gas pipeline, but how it was blown up. Because of those facts, we can say that those events were the result of the use of force, which runs contrary to the purposes of the United Nations.

In my statement, I will not dwell on other details revealed by Mr. Hersh's ground-breaking investigation, which our two briefers, Jeffrey Sachs and Ray McGovern, spoke about in detail earlier. Let me just say that the breadth of the information that he has gathered is amazing. His previous professional experience and impeccable journalistic reputation leave no doubt that the American journalist is telling the truth. Not only is that striking, but so is their level of cynicism and confidence in their own impunity with which they committed that unprecedented crime. Of course, we have become inured to the fact that our American colleagues place themselves above the law, while claiming, in fact, that they are the law. Only they can interfere in the internal affairs of other States and carry out unconstitutional coups and acts of aggression against independent States with impunity.

I would like to remind members of the Security Council that, as early as the end of the Cold War, according to a document prepared in 2022 by the United States Congressional Research Service, there have been 251 cases of using United States armed forces abroad. They are then the only ones who are allowed to kill and maim civilians in other countries while refusing to hand over the perpetrators to the international justice

system. Along with their allies, who run with the herd, they call that the rules-based order, where they themselves dictate the rules.

Still, in the past, they did not go so far as to blow up foreign pipelines owned by States with which the United States is not at war. But now that day has arrived, and it may well be a precursor of an era in which cross-border and transcontinental communications become legitimate targets for operations aimed at weakening various States, which will be, as you can imagine, an era of chaos and unimaginable damage for the whole of humankind. The chances of that occurring are very high, especially if the perpetrators of the Nord Stream explosion are not found and brought to justice, and if the countries that are behind it do not compensate the affected countries for the damage they caused in a manner stipulated under international law and basic principles of justice. Then, and only then, would we have a chance to avert this state of chaos. Everything is in the hands of the members, and the choice is also being made today, during today's Security Council meeting.

Contrary to what our former Western partners will say today, we are not involved in spreading disinformation in the Council. And we are not trying to make accusations based on something being highly likely, as was done, for example, by the representatives of the United Kingdom here in this Chamber, who used supposition and conjecture that run counter to facts and common sense in an unconvincing attempt to accuse us five years ago of poisoning the Skripals.

Regarding the Nord Stream explosion, there is no doubt as to the motive for the crime, the perpetrator or the manner in which the crime was carried out. That is even better than the smoking gun all the American detectives in Hollywood blockbusters dream of finding. With such evidence, no lawyer would take on the defence of our American colleagues and there would be no doubt whatsoever in the jury's verdict. But we are not here in order to set up a trial in the Security Council. As Council members are aware, we have presented a draft resolution requesting the Secretary-General to conduct an independent international investigation to verify the facts that Seymour Hersh and other independent journalists have put forward. We felt compelled to do so because we have significant doubts about the effectiveness, transparency and impartiality of the investigations currently being carried out in a number of national jurisdictions. And we do not see any willingness on the part of our partners to cooperate.

We have taken note of the letter circulated today by the Permanent Representatives of Germany, Denmark and Sweden stating that the authorities of those countries have informed Russia about the progress in the investigation. In reality, the situation is very different. The leadership of those States had ignored the communications that were sent in October 2022 from the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. Mishustin, regarding the participation in the investigation of representatives of Russia's relevant federal executive bodies and of representatives of the Gazprom company. Similar requests made by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Russia were also declined.

Since we are talking about a crime committed with the assistance of an explosive device, which therefore falls under the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings of 15 December 1997, we do expect that the States that have something to do with the incident, primarily the United States, Norway, Denmark and Sweden, will uphold their obligations under the Convention. However, in this case too, the political will of their leadership is lacking. More precisely, it is simply absent. Therefore, unfortunately, we have no other way of getting to the truth. The so-called investigations being carried out by the Scandinavian countries and Germany are not only non-transparent, but it is also quite clear that they are aimed solely at covering their tracks and protecting their big brother in America. We are not allowed to join in them, and all our requests are being arrogantly ignored.

Incidentally, we find it rather odd that those countries taking part in the investigations did not request to participate in today's meeting. With other meetings, we see a whole line of those willing to take the floor. And we of course do not, and cannot, have any trust in them. But the Secretary-General is somebody we still generally trust, and we hope the Council does too, so that is why we propose that he should be put in charge of the investigation. We have circulated in the General Assembly and the Security Council an address of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation containing a corresponding request, as well as notes from the Russian embassies to the Foreign Ministries of Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the United States on that matter. Anyone who wishes to consult those documents is welcome to do so.

If our American colleagues have nothing to fear, and if they have no doubt in the fact that the conclusions of their compatriots are wrong, then that means the United

States does not risk anything, and soon we will be able to confirm that. In that context, we will strive to identify and hold accountable those who have encroached on international peace and security. Therefore, we look forward to our proposal being supported. Experts are discussing the text at the moment. After the first round of discussion, however, we have the impression that Western experts are not interested in having an objective international investigation in any case, which of course only increases our suspicions.

The approach of Council members to our proposed draft resolution and their interest, or lack thereof, in finding the perpetrators and bringing them to justice will indeed be decisive in terms of our further steps in the context of this act of sabotage. We very much want to believe that Council members will not disappoint us or their own citizens, and that they will help to determine the truth as to what happened, pursuant to the Charter of our world Organization.

Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique): Mozambique would like to thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Professor Jeffrey Sachs and Mr. Raymond McGovern for their important briefings on the issue of the Nord Stream incident that took place in September 2022.

We are aware of the allegation of sabotage made regarding the incident. In our opinion, it is imperative that a thorough investigation be effected in order to determine the real cause of the incident. We call on the relevant Governments to act in good faith, in an expeditious and thorough manner, taking into account the seriousness of the allegations.

Together with its potential security implications, the Nord Stream incident could also represent an ecological danger. The release of harmful substances into the environment can have long-lasting consequences for both the ecosystem and the health of the local community. The European Space Agency estimates that the emissions leak from the Nord Stream gas pipeline was roughly equivalent to one and a half days of global methane emissions. Therefore, in addition to the potential security implications, the Nord Stream incident also has a significant ecological impact, with the release of huge amounts of methane gas. It is therefore our responsibility to take all the measures necessary to minimize harm to the environment and ensure that such incidents are prevented from happening in the future. It is crucial for the Security Council to remain vigilant in

addressing incidents such as this and to work to find a solution that upholds international law and promotes the greater good.

In conclusion, the Nord Stream incident serves as a reminder of the need to quickly de-escalate the conflict, whose ramifications keep expanding.

Mrs. Sánchez Izquierdo (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo and the other briefers for their briefings.

Since September 2022, we have remained deeply concerned about the explosions in the Nord Stream 1 and 2 submarine pipelines in the Baltic Sea because, first, as we said time and again, nothing justifies attacks on essential civilian infrastructure, including energy infrastructure; secondly, in addition to endangering safe maritime and air navigation, it meant an immeasurable source of pollution of local marine life, with potentially devastating climatic consequences, having released hundreds of millions of cubic metres of gas into the atmosphere; and, thirdly, it occurred amid an extremely complex global geopolitical situation, in which any event could trigger actions with unforeseeable consequences. For all those reasons, Ecuador condemns such acts and calls on all States of this Organization to demonstrate the utmost caution and restraint.

We also acknowledge the security measures taken by Denmark and Sweden in September to reduce the risk to shipping, and we appreciate the joint letter of today, 21 February, also signed by Germany, in which they report on the investigations under way, in line with the basic principles of the rule of law. We therefore express our support for those investigations and await their conclusions. The international community and the Security Council should encourage the progress of the investigations by preventing disruptive actions that limit or affect them.

Ms. Koumby Missambo (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Professor Jeffrey Sachs and Mr. Ray McGovern for their briefings.

The Security Council meets again today to discuss the aftermath of the explosions on 26 and 27 September 2022, causing major gas leaks from the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines, which carry gas from Russia to Europe via the Baltic Sea. Strong suspicions of sabotage, clearly linked to the war in Ukraine, surrounded those particularly alarming developments given the

environmental damage caused by methane gas leaks. I would like to point out that methane gas is 80 per cent more warming than carbon dioxide and that, in this case, the release of that gas into the sea represents a genuine environmental disaster and a clear threat to marine flora and fauna.

The meeting on 30 September 2022 concluded that the possibility of an accident had been ruled out and that investigations should be carried out to shed light on such events (see S/PV.9144). My country takes note of the opening of investigations by some European countries, in particular Sweden, Denmark and Germany, and of the results of the preliminary investigations, which underscore the suspicion of sabotage.

My country reiterates its condemnation of those unjustifiable attacks on civilian infrastructure. In addition to the significant environmental consequences, they cause economic losses, the effects of which go far beyond the countries concerned, thereby increasing the conflict's impact on the economies of many countries. We recall that the parties are obliged to respect international conventions that protect civilian populations and infrastructure against armed attacks.

Finally, my country calls on all the parties to demonstrate responsibility, exercise the utmost caution and do everything possible to ensure that the perpetrators of the attacks are held responsible for such acts.

Mr. Phipps (United Kingdom): Let me begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing.

The United Kingdom condemns the acts of sabotage targeting the Nord Stream pipeline. However, it is not clear to us why, five months on, Russia is suddenly pursuing the issue here with such urgency.

We welcome the letter from Denmark, Sweden and Germany informing States Members of the United Nations that investigations are ongoing. The United Kingdom fully supports those technical investigations, led by the competent national authorities, and awaits their findings.

The only recent development regarding Nord Stream of which we are aware is a new round of lurid accusations by Russian State-controlled media and public figures. They are the same actors that originally chose to accuse the United Kingdom.

The basis for the new accusations is an article by an American journalist, which cites only a single secret source. It is no surprise that the Russian Ambassador chose not to dwell on the details, as such details have already been comprehensively debunked by other journalists, including on the basis of very straightforward, open-source fact-checking.

It is therefore our view that the real reason for Russia's urgency today is a desperate desire to distract attention one year on from the start of its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the massive casualties suffered by the Russian military and the devastation that Russia's war has wrought on the people of Ukraine, as well as its effects across the globe.

The United Kingdom takes the issue of attacks on critical infrastructure very seriously. That is why we have so frequently condemned Russia's attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, schools and hospitals in the Council. However, we are not convinced that Russia's initiative today, or its calls for the establishment of a United Nations commission of inquiry, amounts to anything more than a distraction from its continuing aggression in Ukraine.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing, and we listened carefully to Mr. Sachs and Mr. McGovern.

Acts of sabotage against energy infrastructure, such as the explosions that damaged the Nord Stream 1 and 2 gas pipelines in the Baltic Sea last September, are unacceptable. They pose a significant threat to international security, stability and prosperity. They may also disrupt markets and undermine the predictability of energy supplies, and, as we saw in this case, they can carry a significant risk of environmental damage.

Last year's explosions had devastating consequences for our planet, leading to the worst methane gas leak ever recorded. As we work together to address climate change, such events only make our collective efforts more difficult.

The United Arab Emirates takes the incident extremely seriously. When we met last September to discuss this issue (see S/PV.9144), the exact cause of the explosions was unknown. What was clear was the importance of conducting an investigation into the causes of the explosions and preventing the situation

from further escalating. The imperative for thorough and credible investigations, alongside the need to reduce tensions, is as relevant today as it was last autumn.

It is important that the investigations be grounded in science and facts, not politics and posturing. The gravity of the situation demands a serious and sober approach and requires holding those responsible accountable. It is vital that we send a loud and clear message that such types of acts cannot be tolerated.

While several investigations are ongoing, we urge all the parties concerned not to resort to unilateral measures or escalatory actions. At a time of considerable regional and international uncertainty, we can ill afford any steps that could inflame tensions.

We await the establishment of the facts around the incidents, the identification of those responsible and the proper steps to ensure accountability.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing to the Security Council. We also thank Professor Jeffrey Sachs and Mr. Ray McGovern for their perspectives.

When we met in the Security Council last September, we expressed great concern about the unprecedented damage caused to the Nord Stream 1 and 2 gas pipelines as a result of what the preliminary investigations by Denmark and Sweden had established to be a deliberate act of sabotage (see S/PV.9144). We welcome the recent joint update submitted to the Council by Denmark, Germany and Sweden on the matter and the confirmation of their respective ongoing investigations by their national institutions. We encourage their further action to conclusively determine the full scope of the incident in respect of the motive and actors. We affirm the international community's continuing interest in the matter, and we stress that the ongoing investigative processes should endeavour to keep the Russian authorities and operators informed and that the cooperation of the latter should be sought as necessary.

We reiterate our position that in accordance with the objects of resolution 2341 (2017), critical infrastructure, especially of a transnational kind, should be protected and kept safe from harm as bridges for cooperation. We note from the available assessment that the environmental damage thus far has been localized and appreciate the swift actions of the concerned countries

to mitigate the immediate impact. However, we remain concerned by the greenhouse-gas emissions, which have non-localized consequences.

Before concluding, we continue to urge that all relevant actors cooperate to establish the facts and ensure that appropriate remedial action, including ensuring accountability, is taken, in order to bring an early closure to the matter. While investigations are ongoing, we urge restraint by all parties concerned and caution against unilateral actions that may be detrimental to peace.

Mrs. Baumann-Bresolin (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, for her briefing. I have also taken note of the remarks of Mr. Jeffrey Sachs and Mr. Ray McGovern.

Switzerland is concerned about the damage to the Nord Stream 1 and 2 gas pipelines, which resulted in worrisome gas leaks last September. As mentioned by several at the Security Council meeting last September (see S/PV.9144), and as mentioned in the letter transmitted to the Council by Denmark and Sweden on 29 September (S/2022/725), all available information indicates that these were acts of sabotage.

Let me reiterate our position of principle: we condemn any attack on critical infrastructure, such as energy infrastructure, and the consequences for supplying the population, the economy and the environment.

It is important to stick to the facts and support any credible effort to shed light on the explosions that took place last September. In this regard, Switzerland notes the letter sent today by Germany, Denmark and Sweden with regard to the ongoing investigations.

Mr. Tamaura (Japan): I thank Under-Secretary-DiCarlo, Mr. Sachs and Mr. McGovern for their briefings.

Japan is deeply concerned about the incident in relation to critical infrastructure, namely, the Nord Stream pipelines, in international waters in the Baltic Sea. We are concerned about potentially long-term damage and risk to the marine environment and climate in the region.

The investigation of the incident is ongoing, and Japan is closely monitoring the progress of the investigation. At the same time, this incident reminds us once again of the importance of ensuring the safety of energy

infrastructure. Any targeting of civilian infrastructure and facilities must be avoided. We strongly condemn any act of violence against them. We are closely following developments and continue to urge those involved to exercise restraint and refrain from engaging in any activity that could disrupt peace and stability.

Energy resources, including natural gas, are fundamental to people's lives. Vandalism to critical infrastructure is an unacceptable act that will have a life-and-death impact on countless people. We hope that the results of the ongoing investigation efforts by Sweden and Denmark will clarify the cause, and the Security Council will be able to discuss the issue on the basis of the results of the investigation. In this regard, we call on all parties to fully cooperate with the ongoing investigation and provide credible information in a transparent manner.

The time and resources of the Security Council, which is responsible for the peace and security of the international community, are not unlimited. It must prioritize its efforts about where to allocate its resources.

Mr. Kelley (United States of America): We thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing.

We listened carefully to the other briefers today. We recognize their past history and service, though we question their relevant knowledge to speak as an expert breifer on the topic at hand.

The United States is deeply concerned by the sabotage that took place on the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 pipelines last September. Deliberate actions to damage critical infrastructure cannot be tolerated.

But let us be clear why we are really in the Security Council Chamber today. Later this week, as we near the one-year anniversary, the General Assembly will debate the impact of Russia's illegal and full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Today's meeting is a blatant attempt to distract from this. As the world unites this week to call for a just and secure peace in Ukraine consistent with the United Nations Charter, Russia desperately wants to change the subject.

This is not the first time that Russia has used its seat on the Security Council to amplify conspiracy theories from the Internet. We wish it would apply the same urgency shown over the past three days, instead, to the myriad credible reports of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law caused by its invading forces.

However, let me state clearly and plainly: accusations that the United States was involved in this act of sabotage are completely false. The United States was not involved at all. Competent authorities in Denmark, Germany and Sweden are investigating these incidents in a comprehensive, transparent and impartial manner. Resources for United Nations investigations should be preserved for cases when States are unwilling or unable to investigate genuinely.

Let us not be fooled by Russia's claim that it only wants an impartial investigation. Its draft resolution clearly implicates the United States and mischaracterizes statements by United States officials. Russia does not seek an impartial investigation. It seeks to prejudice ongoing ones towards a predetermined conclusion of its choosing.

The expedited timeline on which the Russian delegation demanded we discuss this issue casts significant doubt on the seriousness of its intentions. The Nord Stream pipeline ruptures occurred five months ago. Now, as we approach the one-year anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia claims it is urgent the Council discuss it this week.

Russia, yet again, is abusing its position as a permanent member of the Security Council by using this meeting as a platform for disinformation and conspiracy theories. It is regrettable that with everything else on the Council's agenda this week — North Korean ballistic missiles, tensions in the Middle East, a humanitarian crisis in Turkey and Syria following devastating earthquakes — that Russia is again deliberately wasting the Security Council's time.

Russia's claim to be concerned over the sabotage of critical infrastructure rings hollow. For months, Russia has relentlessly attacked its neighbour, striking cities and towns across Ukraine, damaging and destroying residential areas and medical facilities. Russia's attacks against Ukraine's civilian infrastructure have left families in Ukraine without heat and electricity during the coldest, darkest period of the year. Later this week, countries will vote in the General Assembly on a draft resolution reaffirming the Charter of the United Nations and calling for an end to hostilities in Ukraine in a manner consistent with the Charter's principles. That should be our priority.

Instead of indulging conspiracy theories, we should focus on ways to diplomatically resolve this conflict in a way consistent with the United Nations Charter and fully restore the territorial integrity of a United Nations Member State.

Mr. Spasse (Albania): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing. We listened carefully to the interventions of Mr. Sachs and Mr. McGovern on the matter.

At the Security Council meeting on 30 September (see S/PV.9144), we expressed our deep concern regarding an apparent act of sabotage on the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines in the exclusive economic zones of Denmark and Sweden, in the Baltic Sea. Such acts are unacceptable. We have welcomed the prompt response and have supported the investigations initiated by the national authorities of Denmark, Germany and Sweden to determine the origin of the damage and the possible perpetrators. As confirmed by the letter sent today to the President of the Security Council by the Permanent Representatives of Denmark, Germany and Sweden, the investigation is under way, and we have full confidence in the respective authorities involved to carry out a real, comprehensive and objective investigation of this case. We look forward to the conclusions of that investigation.

In that context, we do not see any need for a parallel investigation by an international commission, as asked for by the Russian Federation, to overlap with what is already going on. From what we heard today, there are no new facts, no new evidence, no attribution, just assumption. Therefore, while we remain staunch supporters of the freedom of speech and of healthy debates, we do not see the Security Council as a depository of conspiracy theories. We have deplored in the past the misuse of the time and resources of the Council to push baseless narratives fed by specific narrow interests, and we reiterate that concern today.

The timing of the request for this meeting is no coincidence. The aim is to divert, in whatever way and by whatever means, even in this empty manner, attention from the events scheduled on the first anniversary of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. While it continuously attacks and bombs the civilian and strategic infrastructure of Ukraine, killing innocent people and making their life unbearable, Russia is trying to mislead international public opinion by misusing the Security Council.

We therefore believe that at this moment there is no need for a Security Council resolution on this issue. Instead, we call on the members of the Council and the wider United Nations membership to fully support the draft resolution on comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, which will be introduced in the

General Assembly this week, and confirm once more that United Nations remains on the right side — a strong foundation for peace and progress against aggression and regression.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo, Professor Jeffrey Sachs and Mr. Ray McGovern for their briefings..

The press article that motivated our meeting today reports serious allegations about September's incidents regarding the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines. It is widely known that there are claims that those incidents were acts of sabotage. Nevertheless, the Brazilian position on this issue remains the same as the one expressed at the meeting called shortly after the events (see S/PV.9144). Any response should be based on sound information and the results of impartial investigations. We ask other members to proceed with caution in the face of assertions attributable to a single anonymous source.

On the other hand, the seriousness of the allegations and the accusation of the involvement of State actors in the episode must be given due consideration by the Council. We understand the importance of secrecy to the success of investigations, but given the political implications of the incidents, we encourage greater transparency in the dissemination of established facts and restraint in the propagation of unproven interpretations. Only in that way will it be possible for us to go beyond the field of speculation.

Brazil reiterates its concern about the consequences of the damage to the Nord Stream pipelines, which resulted in the worsening of the energy crisis in Europe and in serious long-term economic losses. The damage to regional energy infrastructure is particularly regrettable. We must also emphasize that the harmful consequences for the environment need to be carefully assessed by the proper international bodies. Brazil is ready to cooperate in order to improve monitoring mechanisms, with a view to preventing incidents that could impact marine life and the level of greenhouse-gas emissions.

Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault (France) (*spoke in French*): France clearly expressed its concern after the two underwater explosions that damaged the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines in the Baltic Sea on 26 September. It was under our presidency that the Security Council met on 30 September on the same subject (see S/PV.9144). Our assessment remains unchanged. These events are unprecedented and must be taken seriously. The

situation is all the more serious because the information available indicates that the explosions were the result of a deliberate human act.

Investigations have been initiated by Germany, Denmark and Sweden. We have no reason to doubt the seriousness of the proceedings, which are under way and must be completed. I would like to thank those three countries for their joint letter to the presidency of the Council on the status of those investigations.

By contrast, we have every reason to doubt the merits of the Russian approach. There is no emergency or new credible information to justify the organization of such a meeting five months after the incident. We are also surprised by the zeal with which Russia is pursuing an investigation into Nord Stream, while it is doing everything to prevent a Secretariat mission from being deployed to Kyiv to inspect the Iranian drone debris there. What we are witnessing today is therefore an attempt to divert the attention of the international community when this Friday will mark one year since Russia launched its war of aggression against Ukraine.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo, Professor Sachs and Mr. McGovern for their briefings.

The Nord Stream gas pipelines are a major transboundary infrastructure and energy transportation artery. The damage to the pipeline in September had a major negative impact on the global energy market and the environment. It also caused energy shortages in businesses and households in many European countries this winter.

It is becoming increasingly clear that what happened to the Nord Stream pipelines was by no means an accident, but rather a deliberate human act. From the perspective of physical conditions, it is hard to imagine that any non-State actor alone would be capable of carrying out such destruction.

In an open meeting of the Council held in September (see S/PV.9144), many countries called for an investigation into the incident in order to uncover the truth and identify those responsible. That is also China's position. China supports speeding up the investigation so as to swiftly determine the truth.

We live in an era of globalization, in which cooperation among countries in energy, transportation and communication is increasingly close and transboundary construction spans continents and

oceans. Any deliberate sabotage of transboundary infrastructure is a malicious act. Failure to determine why it happened and who is behind the destruction will send the wrong signal to those with ill intentions and make them believe that they can get away with whatever they do.

An objective, impartial and professional investigation into the matter, the pursuit of accountability and the release of the results of such an investigation as soon as possible will not only relate to the incident itself but also have a bearing on the security of global transboundary infrastructure. Moreover, they are also closely related to the interest and concerns of every country.

As the most authoritative and representative international organization, the United Nations can play an active role in conducting an international investigation and in ensuring the security of transboundary infrastructure. China welcomes the draft resolution presented by Russia in the Council and believes that it is of great significance in authorizing an international investigation into the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines.

Recently, we have come across many details and relevant information about the Nord Stream incident, and that information is alarming. Today the briefers also shared with us important information and their reasonable analysis. Faced with such detailed material and comprehensive evidence, a simple statement of utterly false and complete fiction is obviously not enough to answer the many questions and concerns raised around the world. Finding a way to dodge today's meeting does not mean that the truth can be concealed. We expect convincing explanations from the relevant parties. Such a request is entirely legitimate and reasonable.

The Nord Stream incident reminds us that security threats in the modern world are increasingly interlinked, transboundary and diversified. That calls for the establishment of a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security concept, a multipronged strategy, an integrated approach and coordinated security governance in order to meet various security challenges. Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed a global security initiative, which provides a new direction and new ideas to eliminate the root causes of conflicts, resolve the security predicament and maintain common security.

The global security initiative concept paper, released by China today, details the core concepts and principles of the initiative and provides an important path to the implementation of the initiative and our 20 key cooperation areas, which are action oriented. We are willing to work with all parties to firmly support the

core role of the United Nations in security governance, strive to promote coordination and interaction among the major Powers, actively promote dialogue and the peaceful resolution of hotspot issues, effectively respond to traditional and non-traditional security challenges, continuously strengthen the global security governance system and capacity-building, maintain peace and tranquility on Earth and create a better future for humankind.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malta.

I begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for her briefing.

The damage to the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines last September, resulting in dangerous leaks into international waters in the Baltic Sea, gives rise to serious safety and environmental concerns. All available information indicates that those leaks were the result of a deliberate act. Any deliberate disruption of energy infrastructure is dangerous and irresponsible, particularly in the midst of a global energy crisis. The weaponization of energy and infrastructure is unacceptable.

The damage from those leaks threatened to deprive Europe of a key route for the delivery of a crucial energy resource. Furthermore, the damage placed increased strain on global energy markets already affected by Russia's war against Ukraine. That not only has an impact on the countries that received energy through the Nord Stream pipelines, but also has repercussions for developing countries around the world. The incident highlights the vulnerability of critical energy infrastructure.

Malta underlines its solidarity with Denmark, Sweden and Germany and strongly supports the ongoing investigations to establish the full truth behind the leaks. We welcome the letter circulated by Denmark, Sweden and Germany providing an update on those investigations.

Malta once again condemns any deliberate destruction of energy infrastructure. Let us not be distracted today from the sheer extent of the damage that Russia's war of aggression has caused in Ukraine, particularly to civilians. Attacks directed against civilians and objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population are prohibited under international humanitarian law. Malta condemns such attacks in the strongest possible terms.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.